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ABSTRACT

This paper describes, from an historicial perspective, the causes and consequences of violent outbreaks involving the black community and examines the effectiveness of various kinds of violence in the resolution of conflict. Violence as a means of protest and a method of change is presented as an integral factor in the shaping of American history. Violence against blacks as a controlling strategy, black community and commodity riots, and alternatives to riots are discussed. It is suggested that white backlash and the emergence of a law and order point of view, extensive property damage, and the polarization of attitudes within the white community as well as death or injury are among the negative effects of urban riots. Also examined, however, is the positive view of violence as primarily a political protest necessary to achieve social change. Urban riots are said to focus attention on the problems of urban ghettos and increase efforts to alleviate these problems while politicizing the black community. The paper concludes that a cooperative process of conflict resolution is much preferred to a competitive one, but with the absence of an adequate power base, riots remain as an alternative to increase power, if only for short periods of time, and to affect decision making processes. (JCD)

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VIOLENCE AS A MEANS OF CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Nefertari Crummey

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INTRODUCTION

There are many methods that a subgroup of a given population can use to resolve problems of conflicting interests between themselves and other groups in the population. These methods of resolving conflict can range from peaceful and nonviolent to explosive and violent. Inherent in any method of conflict resolution are certain risks and benefits that are the consequences of the kinds of actions taken. For the most part, attempts to resolve an inequitable situation through violent means, have been looked upon as negative, destructive tools for procuring positive, constructive change. Nonetheless, violence as a means of affecting change is a method used by many groups throughout history. Although a part of the American tradition is to solve conflict using democratic means, most change in this country has been accompanied by a great deal of violence.

A group of people against whom violence has been used, and by whom violence has been used as a means of solving problems and addressing grievances are black Americans. During the last century, riotous outbreaks involving the black community have become more prevalent. In the period before World War II, these outbreaks were most often initiated by the white community as a means of suppressing and controlling the black population. After World War II, there began to emerge a pattern of black initiated rebellions used as a means of addressing grievances against the white community. The purpose of this paper is to describe the various kinds of riotous outbreaks involving the black community, describe some of the causes of these outbreaks, and to investigate their effectiveness, both positive and negative, as methods

of resolving conflict.

Violence in America: An Historical Overview

The ghetto riots of the 1960's have taken on novelty not so much because they portray the black man as rebelling and fighting back against the system, but because they portray him in an offensive, instead of the usual defensive position he has taken in the past. His behavior is more of an open, retaliatory nature than the protective and defensive position he has previously assumed. In comparison to the history of violence displayed in America, ghetto revolts by far, are not as tumultous as many other incidents of American violence. The shock and dismay that many whites displayed upon viewing the outbreaks in the black communities was not a reaction to the violence per se, but more a reaction to the fact that violence, as a means of addressing grievances, was being used by blacks instead of its customary users, whites.

The American Tradition of Violence

The use of violence as a means of protest is well ingrained in the fabric of American life. Although most Americans have conveniently managed to forget about the violent past of this country, an historical analysis shows that attempts by many groups to gain equal rights were accompanied by violence. Richard Hofstadter (1970) states that

> Violence has been used repeatedly in our past, often quite purposefully, and a full reckoning with the fact is a necessary ingredient in any realistic self-image. In pursuit of their goals substantial groups of Americans--more often than not well situated in the social order--have from time to time preferred direct action to law, and violence to peaceful accom-

> modation. Our recent concern with the problem may have reached unprecedented levels of intensity, but such concern is hardly new (p. 475).

Many instances of efforts to affect political change were accompanied by violence. Attempts to organize and unionize members of the working class were fraught with instances of violence that often escalated to alarming proportions resulting in many deaths and injuries. Taft and Ross (1969), reported that between January, 1902 and September 30, 1904, 198 persons were killed and 1,966 persons were injured during strikes and lockouts. An independent count conducted by Taft and Ross of labor disputes found 700 deaths, thousands of serious injuries, and 160 instances in which State and Federal troops intervened. Attempts by various religious, ethnic, and racial groups to gain equal rights were often violently opposed.

What is most striking about the history of violence in this country is that it is most often initiated by those in established power. Hofstadter (1970), refers to this use of violence by those in control as a "conservative bias." This has resulted in violence being used

> against abolitionists, Catholics, radicals, workers and labor organizers, Negroes, Orientals, and other ethnic or racial or ideological minorities, and has been used ostensibly to protect the American, the Southern, the white Protestant, or simply the established middle-class way of life and morals (p. 11).

Hofstadter further states that our new concern about violence not only reflects a response to the increase in violence but also to the change in role of violence now being used by those who oppose the established middle-class way of life and power structure. So the pattern that emerges indicates that violence as a means of affecting change is a

familiar technique that has been used against and by those who presently constitute the existing power structure. As Skolnick (1969) suggests, the allusion to the concept of peaceful progress that many Americans hold is nothing more than a myth.

The Issue of Power

Skolnick (1969), states that

> a young black man setting fire to a Vietnamese hut is considered a dutiful citizen; the same man burning a grocery store is a dangerous criminal, condemned for "resorting to violence" and subject to lawful exercise of deadly force. Violence, then, is proscribed or condoned through political processes and decisions. The violence of the warrior in the service of the state is applauded; that of the rebel or insurgent against the state condemned (p. 6).

This statement further illustrates the point that violence, at least in America, is usually considered the lawful right of those in power, and their use of force, no matter how violent, is usually accepted without question. Yet the use of violence and force by those outside of the power structure as a means of protest is considered illegal and immoral. It is not the violence that evokes the strong protest but rather, who is using the violence.

At this point, a distinction has to be made between what Hofstadter (1970), labels "acts of force" and "acts of violence." Acts of force prevent the normal free movement or action of others or inhibits this movement by the use of threat. On the other hand, acts of violence are those in which property is damaged or individuals are killed or injured. In most instances, not only is the use of violence thought to be the privilege of those in power, but also the use of force or collective, non-violent protest. Skolnick (1969), presents results taken from a

California poll that indicate that 40% of the people sampled felt that the citizenry had no right to engage in "peaceful" demonstrations against the war in Vietnam, although such demonstrations are legal. Campbell and Schuman (1968), in a survey of racial attitudes, found that a substantial proportion of the white sample opposed non-violent protest actions by blacks as well as violent. More than a quarter of the sample felt that blacks were not justified in using "orderly marches to protest against racial discrimination" and more than two-thirds believed that "sit-in" protests are unjustified.

The issue of power, or more explicitly what Skolnick refers to as the "non-violent transfer of power" becomes crucial here. The dilemma presented by those who yield power is that they are usually unwilling to peacefully give up or share that power with contending groups, thus in a sense, forcing those others to either accept the conditions laid down by those in power or resort to mass protest and violence. The dilemma is further compounded when those contenders are of low status or low power and have little or no control over the legal and political channels through which to change the balance of power. The paradox to peaceful change presented here is that those in power who want to maintain the status quo, more often than not, only respect those others who are equally as powerful.

Violence as a Strategy

Often when those in power can no longer maintain that power through any other means, they resort to the use of official violence and force. Skolnick, in describing the acquisition of power by many domestic ethnic groups, states that these groups often used violence, directly or indirectly, to obtain that power and once obtained, "they

did not hesitate . . . to employ official violence through control of local governments and police forces against emerging groups as militant as they once had been" (p. 17). The development of special police forces and the strengthening of local police and law enforcement agencies was a direct response by those in power to the mass protests of contending groups. Taft and Ross (1969), in describing labor violence, reported that between 1865 and 1931, every railroad and colliery in Pennsylvania was empowered to hire their own police forces. These forces were not in any way regulated or supervised by the State. Other states empowered the local sheriffs and officials to appoint persons paid by the employers to perform strike and police duties. Not only were those in power allowed the "legitimate" use of force and violence, but their agents were often the ones who initiated the violence associated with mass protests. Taft and Ross reported that although the workers often engaged in collective protests and demonstrations, the initiators of the violence were often the private police, company guards and policemen. Marx (1970), in a review of police behavior during interracial riots in the early 1900's, found that:

> (a) the police were sympathetic to (white) demonstrators and rioters and often joined the riot themselves, (b) police often failed actively to enforce the law, and (c) when police did try to maintain law and order, this often was not done in a neutral and impartial manner (p. 22).

Marx suggests that this bias on the part of the police can be attributed to the fact that the police represent the dominant group whose power is threatened. In regard to the biased action of the police towards minorities, Palmer (1971) has stated that "the police and their behavior are largely symbolic of the general stance of the society in regard to

race relations" (p. 165). In the more recent interracial clashes such as the sit-ins and demonstrations in the South, the majority of the violence was initiated by white law enforcement agents against the black demonstrators. Many of the ghetto riots of the 60's began as a response to the use of excessive force by the police.

To summarize, in the above perspective it is being suggested that as a strategy to control and consolidate power, those in power often resort to the use of excessive force and violence. If this violence cannot be carried out through legitimate means, i.e., empowering police and company guards, there is very little hesitation to use illegitimate methods--vigilantes, KKK, strike breakers, etc. And even though these methods may be illegitimate, there is usually very little lawful reprisals for those in power.

Mass protests and violence as used by low powered groups as a strategy to change the balance of power, often have many beneficial effects. Skolnick describes a process in which violent mass revolt often results in an increase in group pride and awareness; the rejection of old-style leaders who do not reflect this new philosophy; and a general move towards greater autonomy and cohesion within the group. A result of this greater autonomy is an increase in political power based on group solidarity which allows the group to demand more from those in power.

Fanon (1966) also comments on the beneficial group effects of violence in describing the efforts of native Africans to decolonize their countries. Fanon believes that the use of violence by the natives has a cathartic effect and states that "at the level of individuals, violence is a cleansing force. It frees the native from the infe-

riority complex and from his despair and inaction; it makes him fearless and restores his self-respect" (p. 73). Fanon believes that violence is the only way by which the native can find freedom. In this sense, violence serves other purposes besides catharsis. It is the mechanism through which the people are unified since "violence is in action all-inclusive and national. It follows that it is closely involved in the liquidation of regionalism and tribalism" (p. 73). The violence of the native also serves to counter balance the violence of the colonial regime. The fear of violence is used as a tool by the native against the colonizer to modify the attitudes of the settlers by showing that the native is capable of retaliation. Thus violence is used as a means of equalizing power.

Poussaint (1969) takes a stand similar to Fanon's on the beneficial effects of violence. Poussaint feels that the major consequences of pre and post slavery oppression on the psyche of the black American are (1) self-hatred and negative self-esteem; (2) suppressed aggression and rage; and (3) dependency and non-assertiveness. Poussaint sees the acts of violence embodied in riots as attempts by blacks to free themselves of suppressed rage through the release of pent-up emotions. This is especially significant since the previous pattern of black aggression has been to channel or direct the aggression inward towards the self instead of outwards towards the sources and symbols of black oppression in the larger society. This tendency to direct the aggressions onto the appropriate targets instead of misdirecting them onto the self is an indication for Poussaint that the black man is progressing from a state of self-hatred to one of self-love. In a sense, violence is the mechanism through which the black man begins to heal

his psyche. This is similar to the process of catharsis suggested by Fanon.

Another effect of the use of violence by blacks has been to affect, as Hamilton (1969) suggests, the "equitable distribution of goods and services." (p. 43). Before the violence errupted in our urban ghettos, the attitude of the dominant culture was that progress was being made and at a rapid rate. But as Hamilton points out, only minimal effort was being made to alleviate the problems facing the black community on an intensive basis. The erruption of violence in the black communities focused attention on the slow pace of progress and brought about immediate attempts to try to equalize the distribution of goods and services by creating new jobs, improved and new housing, etc. So a direct and immediate effect of violence was to first focus attention on the problem, and second, increase the speed and magnitude at which efforts were being made to alleviate the problems. In some ways, the solutions suggested may have been superficial and cosmetic, but in the short run, there were some positive gains from the use of violence.

The Strategy of Violence: Successful or Unsuccessful

There are many factors that determine whether the use of violence by any given group is considered successful or unsuccessful but as Hofstadter (1970) states, "the difficulty in justifying violence is that its success is an ingredient in its justification" (p. 32). One also has to take into account long term, as well as short term effects. A conflict, which at the outset seems destructive and non-productive, may be the impetus for future social change, or increased group cohesion. Deutsch (1968), enumerates some of the following things as

productive effects of conflict: preventing stagnation; stimulating interest and curiosity; being the medium through which problems are aired or solutions arrived at; being the root of personal and social change; fostering internal group cohesion; revitalizing or changing group norms; and modifying the terms of power relations (pp. 19-21).

The history of violence in the United States suggests that the use of violence by those in power as a means of curtailing group protest is usually successful in obtaining short range goals, i.e., squelching a union protest, breaking up non-violent and violent protests by dissident groups, or in general, putting down protest movements that challenge the status quo. But in terms of long range goals, the use of violence by those in power has been less successful, i.e., dissident groups such as unions and ethnic minorities eventually gained privileges despite official violence.

On the other hand, violence and mass protest has, in many instances been used effectively as a means of political protest by dissident groups. In some instances, the short term effects seemed disasterous, but the long term effect was to provide the impetus for social change.

The above perspective on the uses of violence is not intended to suggest that in the long run, the effects of violence are always unsuccessful for those in power or always successful for those contenders to power. Violence was successfully used by the American government to put down Indian rebellions and the use of violence against and by black Americans is filled with mixed stories of success and failure. This perspective is also not intended to suggest that violence, as a strategy, is more productive than other means of conflict resolution. Clearly, a cooperative process would be preferred

but in its absence, the use of violence can have some beneficial effects.

Violence Involving Blacks

White-Initiated Violence Against Blacks

Once an analysis of violence in America has been put into perspective, then the motivational base for the use of violence by whites against blacks becomes clearer. Violence has been used as a controlling mechanism against blacks from the time they stepped off the slave ship up through the present day. Slavery itself was a very bloody and violent experience and without the use of violence, slavery as known in America, would probably never have succeeded. History is full of accounts of slaves being beaten to death, lynched, or burned alive as punishment for attempted escapes or revolts. After an attempted revolt in New York City in April of 1712, 18 slaves were sentenced to death--some by hanging, some by torture, and the rest burned to death. The sentence for one of the slaves stated that he be "burned with a slow fire that he may continue in torment for eight or ten hours and continue burning in the said fire until he be dead and consumed to ashes" (Hofstadter, p. 187). After the 1795 revolt at Pointe Coupee, Louisiana, 25 slaves were killed by the authorities and of those caught and tried, 16 were hung in the parish, and the remaining 9 were left hanging from trees at various points along the river to New Orleans. After an 1811 revolt near New Orleans, 16 leaders were tried and executed and their heads mounted on poles along the Mississippi River. Thousands of blacks lost their lives during this era but the end of slavery did not bring an end to the violent abuse of the black

man. To the contrary, many avenging whites continued to use violence to illegally maintain a system that was legally abolished. The re-emergence of the Klu Klux Klan to deal specifically with "keeping blacks in their place" is only one facet of post slavery violence against blacks. As Richard Wade (1969 has stated "Emancipation freed the Negro from bondage, but it did not grant him either equality or immunity from white aggression" (p. 16).

Although blacks were legally "free" from slavery, they still were not allowed all of the rights and benefits of citizenship in this country. Segregation became a means of legally maintaining the abolished system of slavery. Blacks had to go to segregated schools, live in segregated housing, swim at segregated beaches, worship in segregated churches and a host of other things. All of the "better" things in life were reserved for "WHITES ONLY" and the whites felt that the most effective way to maintain their superior position was by keeping the blacks "in their place." Although the legal structure afforded whites ample opportunities to restrict blacks within the law, as blacks began demanding more, and resisting attempts by whites to subjugate them, many whites resorted to violence as an added measure of control. As Hofstadter reports, violence began almost immediately after Appomattox. Blacks were beaten, lynched and raped by avenging Southerners. As Reconstruction progressed and blacks began assuming positions in the political structure, violence by whites against blacks increased. Hofstadter, citing results given by the United States Attorney General, states that in Texas between 1868 and 1870, a thousand blacks were killed a year. In Louisiana, between 1866 and 1875, thirty-five hundred people were killed and wounded, mostly all

black, and in 1868 alone, 1,884 were killed and wounded.

Communal riots. During the 1900's, as blacks began migrating to industrial centers, there began to emerge what Janowitz (1969) describes as communal riots. As large black enclaves began to develop, the older patterns of accommodation and black submission became less effective. Blacks began competing for jobs and whites became incensed over blacks intruding upon their "privileged domain." As the black communities expanded, the whites became more concerned over defining boundaries and containing the growth of the black communities. This usually resulted in forages into the black communities in which houses were bombed or burned. Preceding a major riot in Chicago in the summer of 1919, 24 black homes were bombed in June and July and many blacks were attacked and killed. In this period, major riots were often precipitated by an incident in which a black encroached upon an area that had been demarcated for "whites only." The Chicago riot errupted after a black youth was stoned and drowned for seimming past a boundary line into the "white" beach area. That riot resulted in the death of 23 blacks, 15 whites, 500 injured, and over 1000 homeless. A riot in Tulsa in 1921 resulted in the entire black district being burned to the ground and some reports of up to 150 black deaths.

Commodity riots. The events at Chicago and Tulsa were repeated over and over again in many cities across the country. This pattern of white initiated violence against the black community continued until 1935 when there began to emerge what Janowitz described as commodity riots. These riots were usually contained within the black community and usually involved black initiated violence against white property. Even within this context, the majority of the people injured and killed

were blacks. Those whites killed by blacks were usually agents of law enforcement--police, national guardsmen, etc.

The first major commodity riot took place in Harlem in 1935. The blacks, already suffering from the effects of the depression combined with segregation and discrimination practices that did not even allow them to work in their own neighborhoods, became incensed over a rumored arrest and beating of a young black youth. The youth had reportedly been arrested for stealing a knife from a Kress store, a store that had repeatedly refused to hire blacks. The youth was taken to the basement of the store as a crowd of angry blacks began to draw on the outside denouncing the action of the police. Spurred on by rumors that the boy had been severely beaten and might even be dead, coupled with the police beating and arrest of several of the speakers outside of the store, the crowd errupted. When the crowd was finally quelled, over 200 stores had been broken into and looted and more than $2,000,000 in property was destroyed. One black was killed and over 100 injured.

The early commodity riots of the 1930's and 40's were precursors for the riots that errupted in the black ghettos in the early 1960's. The pattern was the same--black initiated violence, directed against white property and symbols of law enforcement and contained within the black community. These incidents usually started off with a minimal of personal violence. Violence against persons did not errupt until the police and national guard were called, at which point, the law enforcement agents initiated the violence against the black population. In these incidences, the majority of the people killed or injured were black.

Black Riots: Violence as Protest

The official response to urban riots has been to discount the significance of this behavior as being an indicator of the general discontent with, and reaction against, conditions in the ghettos. The tendency instead has been to attribute the riots to "communist agitators" or to the unstable elements within the community. Fogelson and Hill (1968), in a review of the McCone Commission study on the Los Angelos riots, found that the official response was to claim that the people who participated in the riots were marginal, i.e., uneducated, unemployed, uprooted, etc., and, that the riots themselves were "meaningless outbursts." In other words, the tendency was to claim that the riots had nothing or very little to do with the deplorable conditions found in most of our urban ghettos.

Since the initial statements of the early 1960's attributing riots to the "riff raff" within the community, a substantial amount of evidence has been accumulated that suggests that the riots were instead articulate protests against the conditions within the ghettos. Fogelson (1971) states that

> the riots were protests because they were attempts to call the attention of white society to the black's widespread dissatisfaction with racial subordination and segregation. The riots were also articulate because they were restrained, selective, and no less important, directed at sources of the blacks most immediate and profound grievances (pp. 21-22).

In a survey conducted by Campbell and Schuman (1968) on black and white attitudes towards involvement in riots, it was found that the blacks attributed the main cause of riots to the "unfair treatment of blacks by whites." The majority of the blacks sampled saw the riots as

"largely spontaneous black protests against unfair treatment, economic deprivation, or a combination of the two" (p. 49). In addition, the general attitude among blacks was that the riots had a positive effect on alleviating the underlying causes of black discontent.

Poussaint (1969) also felt that the ghetto riots were a form of protest but characterizes the actions in terms of psychic reactions to oppression. According to Poussaint, the riots were outbursts of "suppressed rage" directed towards symbols of the white establishment. Through this form of protest, blacks were expressing their dissatisfaction towards, and rejection of a system that oppressed them both physically and mentally.

Factors that Contribute to Open Protests and Riots

Now that the tide of violence has changed from white initiated to black initiated, increasing amounts of attention are being focused on the factors that motivate this seeming change in black behavior. In placing the ghetto riots, or what Pfautz (1969) calls "expressive insurrections" into perspective, one has to ask whether the behavior associated with these uprisings is indeed different from previously exhibited behavior, and if so, to what magnitude. To some extent, the trend has been to characterize the past behavior of blacks as passive and docile in comparison to the more recent behavior embodied in ghetto revolts. In fact, many reports (Caplan, 1970; Sears & McConahay, 1970; Forward & Williams, 1970; Graham & Gurr, 1969) have tried to base the outbreaks on the emergence of a "New Urban Black Man" who is young, more educated, and primarily reared in the North. It can be asked

whether the assumptions on which this statement is based are valid ones.

An Old or a New Black Man

There are many reports of blacks rebelling during and after slavery. Although many of the rebellions were unsuccessful, this does not negate the fact that blacks still struck out against the system. In Louisiana, 1795, a planned revolt of blacks was discovered and stopped. Twenty-five slaves were killed and others were captured and tried. In 1822, a Charleston, South Carolina slave, Denmark Vesey, was accused of leading an uprising. He, along with many other blacks, was killed. The number of blacks said to have been involved in the plot range from six to nine thousand. In 1811, 500 slaves revolted in the parish north of New Orleans, wounding the plantation owner and killing his son. They then marched on New Orleans, recruiting slaves as they went. In 1831, Nat Turner organized a force of blacks, killed his master and family, and then preceded on a 22 mile hike, killing at least 57 whites along the way. In 1800, a revolt headed by a slave named Gabriel took place in Virginia. About 1000 slaves armed with clubs and swords gathered outside of Richmond. The plan was discovered and ended in failure. It is suggested that between 2,000 and 10,000 blacks were actually involved. There are also many accounts of smaller incidents and individual attempts of blacks to strike out against their slave masters.

After the period of slavery, there are also many accounts of blacks arming themselves for self-defense against attacks by whites. In Tulsa, Oklahoma, 1921, fighting broke out after a group of armed blacks tried to prevent a white mob from lynching a black man. Many of

the historical accounts given only mention incidents of blacks arming themselves against white mobs. This could be a true representation of the events that took place during that time but it could also represent a bias on the part of the white press in publishing accounts of successful black retaliation. The fear of blacks reading accounts of successful black outbreaks and using them as a model could have suppressed this information.

These accounts of black rebellion do much to question whether the outbreaks of today are due to the emergence of a "new black man" or are a result of the "old black man" using new tactics. Caplan (1970), in reviewing black outbreaks, states that "they are more similar to the earlier slaveship uprisings than they are to the white-initiated interracial riots that occurred after World War I and II" (p. 72).

Characteristics of Urban Blacks Today

Caplan (1970), in his report on "The New Ghetto Man" tried to decipher some of the traits that characterize modern ghetto blacks, and to make a distinction between militant and non-militant blacks. He found that militants are not significantly different from non-militants in social and personal deviance. In terms of unemployment, he found no significant difference between rioters and non-rioters. He also found that those at the lowest end of the socio-economic scale are least likely to riot. He further reports that militants and rioters are usually better educated and are most often likely to be well intergrated into the black community. Caplan points out that attempts to determine whether rioters "are more likely to use whites as social comparative referents have found no support" (p.68), and in

general has found that rioters tend to be more hostile towards whites. Caplan further states that

> Neither social envy of whites nor material greed motivates men to riot, but rather anger over the conditions that produce- and the practices that sustain- barriers denying Negroes the same freedoms and opportunities available to whites (p. 68).

Other theories attributing riots to unstable elements or "riff-raff" within the black community have also found little support. The evidence stated in the majority of the literature (Tomlinson, 1970; Fogelson & Hill, 1968; Fogelson, 1970; Fogelson, 1971; Ritchie, 1969) found little support for this hypothesis but found instead that rioters are better educated, long term residents. They are just as likely to be employed as non-rioters and are more politically sophisticated and active. They are also more likely to have a positive self-image (Tomlinson, 1979). Again the theory that blacks were responding to the conditions in the ghetto and not to marginal elements of rabble rousers and communist agitators emerged.

In a survey of racial attitudes in American cities (Campbell & Schuman, 1968), it was found that over half of the black respondents saw ghetto riots as "mainly protest" while under 10% saw the riots as "mainly looting." About a quarter of the sample saw the riots as a 50/50 mixture of both protest and looting. Blacks attributed the main cause of riots to unfair treatment. When asked "What do you see as the main cause of these disturbances?" under 16% of the black respondents replied Black Power or other radicals (5%), looters or other undesirables (11%), or Communist agitators (0%). Black men saw the following as the major causes of riots: discrimination, unfair treatment (49%); unemployment (23%); inferior jobs (13%); bad housing (23%); poor

education (10%); police brutality (10%) (p. 48).

Internal-external control. Forward and Williams (1970), investigated the influence of increasing feelings of internal control on black protest. They contrasted two theories, that of Ransford (1968) which predicts that those with the lowest sense of internal control, and therefore a greater sense of subjective powerlessness would be more likely to participate in riots, to that of Caplan and Paige (1968) which predicts that those with the greatest sense of internal control and therefore greater feelings of blocked-opportunity would be more likely to participate in riots. Forward and Williams found that their evidence corresponded more with the blocked-opportunity theory of Caplan and Paige. Their results were based on two subdivisions of the Rotter (1966) internal-external control scale. They found that persons who had a positive reaction to riots had the highest scores for personal control (feelings of internal control over own future), while those who reacted negatively had the lowest scores. They found no difference in control ideology (general belief in Protestant ethic values about work and rewards) between the two groups. They also reported a tendency for rioters to blame the system more as causes of riots, while non-rioters were more inclined to blame internal sources.

The findings of Forward and Williams are supported by other studies (Caplan, 1970; Tomlinson, 1969) that found that rioters had a more positive self-image and higher levels of racial pride, and that rioters were more likely to blame the system for discontent and disturbances in the black community.

Urbanization and socialization. Sears and McConahay (1970) offer the hypothesis that major changes in the black population such as

rapid urbanization and more aggressive socialization techniques are responsible for the recent surges in black protest. They cite evidence such as the following: 11% of the black population lived outside of the South in 1910 as compared to 45% in 1966; 29% lived in urban areas in 1910 as compared to 69% in 1966; 66% of older migrants to Los Angeles (age 45 or older who migrated to Los Angeles by the age of 30) compared to 38% of the younger (age 15 to 29 who migrated to Los Angeles before age 7) felt they could trust their political representatives; the younger natives of Northern cities were more likely to riot than older, Southern migrants.

Frustration-aggression hypotheses. The occurence of massive group violence within a society is often attributed to "strains" in and discontent with the prevailing system. The Feierabends (Feierabend, Feierabend & Nesvold, 1969) postulate a theory in which frustration, defined as the thwarting or interference with attainment of goals, aspirations, or expectations, creates social strains which are the preconditions of violence. When the frustrations or strains within a subgroup of society become "systematic" or experienced simultaneously and collectively by that subgroup, then the occurence of group violence on a massive level becomes more likely.

Although social strains and frustrations can be caused by discrepancies between objective levels of attainment of a subgroup and the relevant comparison group, some theorists believe that it is not the objective deprivation that causes the greatest amount of frustration, but the perceived difference between what the individual thinks he should obtain and what he actually obtains. Stouffer et al. (1949), explain discontent in terms of discrepancies between what the person

anticipates and what he actually attains. The absolute or objective level of attainment is not as important as the relative deprivation the individual feels.

According to Gurr (1969; 1971), civil strife and urban disorders can be tied directly to levels of relative deprivation. Gurr feels that discontent and aggressive potential increases the greater the discrepancy between what one feels one deserves and what one feels is attainable. The greater the expectation for attainment, the greater is the intensity of frustration and anger when those expectations are thwarted.

J-Curve of relative deprivation. Davies (1969) states that the uprisings in our urban ghettos are "revolutions of rising expectations." Davies feels that

> revolution is most likely to take place when a prolonged period of rising expectations and rising gratifications is followed by a gap between expectations and gratifications that quickly widens and becomes intolerable (p. 671).

According to Davies, the black rebellions of the 1960's fit this J-Curve model. There were substantial and consistent gains in employment, housing, education, etc. since the period following World War II. The number of black lynchings and killings had declined and the passing of new legislation and laws gave the illusion of finally giving blacks an equal status in this country. This period of rising gains and rising expectations was followed by the brutal and repressive action against Southern blacks during the demonstrations and protests of the 1960's. Davies points out that during this period, there was no marked deprivation in material goods to which blacks had become accustomed. The felt frustration and deprivations were not mainly material ones but spir-

itual. The rise in white violence "affronted the dignity of black people as human beings. Black people sensed that their various and continuously rising expectations, now confronted with violence, were to rise no more" (Davies, 1969, p. 701). This action served to set up the gap between expectations and gratifications that was the impetus for black violence.

Although Davies felt that there was no sudden rise in unemployment among blacks or marked deprivation in material goods to which they had become accustomed, the statistics for this period do point to the fact that there were large discrepancies between blacks and whites in such things as housing, income, education, etc. The 1966 United States Department of Labor Report on The Negro in the United States reports statistics such as the following:

1. In 1960, a fifth of the black population was concentrated in six cities, all but one outside of the South (p. 3).

2. Those six cities among those having 100,000 Negroes or more in 1960 showed less employment gain than the national average between 1963 and 1965 (p. 17).

3. In the two cities having the largest Negro population in their region as well as substantial Negro immigration- Los Angeles and New York- there was no increase in manufacturing employment (p. 17).

4. In March 1966, nonwhite workers constituted about 11% of the civilian labor force of the United States, but accounted for over 21% of the unemployed (p. 19).

5. Throughout the period since World War II, non-white unemployment rates have consistently exceeded the rates for white workers, but the gap varies with the business cycle. In the most recent full year

of the current upswing, when unemployment rates for white workers averaged 4.1%, the rate for non-whites was twice as high--8.3% (p. 19).

6. Within each broad occupational group, non-white workers are more likely than whites to be employed in the least skilled categories and at the lowest levels of the well paid jobs (p. 28).

7. Negro earnings are so low that, regardless of whether Negroes are employed, unemployed, or out of the labor force, their incomes fall within a narrow range at a low level. On the other hand, the factor of employment causes a great widening of the range and level of whites incomes (p. 35).

8. In 1964, 37% of Negro families had incomes below $3000, compared with only 15% white families (p. 35).

9. About 40% of non-white families, compared to 12% of white families were judged poor in 1964 (p. 36).

10. Despite the greater housing need among Negroes, almost nine out of ten the 16.8 million housing units added to the "standard housing" supply between 1950 and 1960 went to white occupants (p. 39).

11. Nonwhite households occupied a much larger proportion of sub-standard housing in 1960 than they did in 1950 although their proportion of the population increased very little during the decade.

Feelings of injustice. The statistics quoted above indicate that there was a definite discrepancy between what blacks received as members of this society and what whites received. It is also important to note, as Wade (1969) points out, that although 68% of the poor people in this country are white, leading to various levels of objective and relative deprivation within the white group, practically all of the urban violence originated in black ghettos. This indicates that there are

other variables mediating whether the amount of deprivation felt will lead to the use of violence. Evidence has previously been cited indicating that black rioters felt the locus of their problems rested in inequitable and unjust treatment by the system (Caplan, 1970; Tomlinson, 1970; Fogelson, 1968, 1971; Campbell & Schuman, 1968). Feelings of injustice can influence and raise levels of perceived relative deprivation, thereby increasing the chance of violent protest. Deutsch (1972), states that

> the sense of injustice can be aroused in relation to the values underlying the distribution of benefits and harms, the rules by which the values are operationalized, the implementation of the rules, or the procedure for determining which values, rules, or practices shall be employed (p. 20).

One of the major factors in determining whether the victim will feel injustice or not is the "total magnitude of relative deprivation: the greater the magnitude of relative deprivation the more likely and the more intense will be the arousal of the sense of injustice" (p. 20). Deutsch lists four things that influence the perception of relative deprivation in the victim: (1) what the individual believes he is entitled to with respect to that value; (2) what he obtains of it; (3) its importance; and (4) its salience. Relative deprivation, and therefore, the sense of injustice can be increased by increasing what the individual feels he's entitled to, or decreasing what the person actually gets.

Legitimacy of the Political System

As has been previously stated, the amount or level of relative deprivation varies depending on the amount of perceived injustice to the victim. A factor that mediates the perception of justice or

injustice and has direct bearing on whether those affected will consider the degree of deprivation tolerable or intolerable is the legitimacy of the political system (Gurr, 1969). Nieburg (1968) defines legitimacy as

> the vitality of the underlying consensus which endows the state and its officers with whatever authority and power they actually possess, not by virtue of legality, but by the reality of the respect which the citizens pay to the institutions and behavior norms. Legitimacy is earned by the ability of those who conduct the power of the state to represent and reflect a broad consensus (p. 385).

If an individual or group feels that the agents of control are legitimately representing their wants and desires, they are more willing to tolerate deprivation. The immediate deprivation is considered legitimate and can be justified in terms of greater payoffs in the future.

For the most part, blacks are outside of the normal functioning of the traditional democratic process. Regardless of whether blacks have "succeeded" in the white world in terms of education, jobs, etc., they are still restricted and limited in their opportunities by the color of their skin. As Wade (1969) points out

> unlike other newcomers, blacks cannot move out of the ghetto into middleclass areas and suburbs because of segregation; therefore, ghetto boundaries increase. Blacks who have "made it" cannot look forward to rewards that all other middleclass Americans have (p. 25).

For blacks, illegitimacy of the system functions on several different planes. First of all, in a democratic system in which concerns of various subgroups are voiced and implemented through a form of representative government, blacks are not adequately represented by people whose main concern is to look after their welfare and foster their well being. This point is illustrated by the lack of black

senators, judges, and congressmen on a local, as well as on a national level. But not only is there a lack of black representatives, in many instances, those white representatives who under democratic principals are supposed to administer in a fair, non-discriminatory manner, often actively work against the interests of blacks.

Illegitimacy of the system vis a vis lack of adequate representation in the control and running of the system emerges in many other areas. Blacks are disproportionately represented in prisons with many more blacks in prison than their proportion in the general population. The factor of disproportionate representation also emerges in unemployment statistics. On the other hand, blacks are under represented in the sharing of wealth and other positive benefits associated with being an American citizen.

To summarize, the problem for blacks is being represented and controlled by people who are not "legitimate" (representative of their group), and who do not represent the best interest of their group. From Gurr's point of view the unwillingness to tolerate the injustices of deprivation can be directly tied to this factor. From the time of slavery, blacks have been suffering for the good of, and to the benefit of white America with very little, if any, positive payoffs. When blacks have made demands for a greater share of the "pie" they have been told that they will get theirs <u>eventually</u> but they have to go slow. But blacks have begun to realize that while they have to wait for their "pie in the sky," the majority of whites are getting theirs here and now. Riots in our urban ghettos could be a warning to America that blacks are not willing to delay gratification for some future goals that may never be realized--an indication that they will no longer

tolerate the injustice of deprivation for a dream that they have been, by and large, excluded from. As stated by Wade (1969), blacks in America have come to realize "that the 'American Dream' is not existent, and at best riddled with holes" (p. 24).

Legitimacy of law enforcement agents. Another, more specific example of illegitimacy of the political system is the non-representativeness of our urban police forces. For the most part, black urban communities are policed by forces that are usually directed and staffed by a disproportionate number of whites. It has been reported (Reiss, 1968) that three out of every four white policemen exhibit prejudice towards blacks. Groves (1968) reported in the Supplemental Studies for The National Advisory Commission on Urban Riots that "not many of the police, especially white, were sympathetic to Negro causes" (p. 59). Fifty-nine percent claimed that the Negroes were moving "much too fast" or "too fast" in gaining what they feel to be equality. Seventy-three percent of the whites and 12% of the Negroes felt this way. Forty-nine percent of the whites expressed some chagrin about Negroes socializing with whites, and 56% were at least "slightly disturbed" with Negroes moving into white residential areas (p. 109). So not only are blacks underrepresented on the police forces, those whites who do work in black areas are often highly prejudiced.

By and large, the attitudes of the police are a reflection of the attitudes of Americans in the society at large. They are only enforcing the stereotypes that the majority of Americans deem appropriate. To many black Americans, the police are just more visable and apparent symbols of the inequality and injustice rampant in the American system.

As stated by Hamilton (1969), the police and their law and order approach

> is seen by many in the ghetto as a clear means of perpetuating the existing situation. It was the law which winked at absentee landlords who violated building codes and failed to repair their buildings. It was the law that participated in the organized crime and prostitution in the ghettos--or, at least, a large number of people think so (p. 45).

In terms of Nieburg's definition of legitimacy, the police forces in our urban ghettos do not command the respect of the citizenry. Their policies and their attitudes reflect the attitudes of discrimination towards blacks in the larger society, often resulting in inequitable and unjust treatment of blacks.

Police: An impetus to violence. Although factors such as urbanization and rapid population change, socialization, relative deprivation, feelings of injustice, etc. play a large part in the reasons why blacks used violence in the form of riots as a means of protest, the most immediate cause of, or precipitating event in black riots was the police and other law enforcement agents (Janowitz, 1969; Gurr, 1969; Marx, 1970; Fogelson, 1971; Skolnick, 1969). Marx (1970) found that

> a review of police behavior in civil disorders of a racial nature through the summer of 1967 suggests a number of instances where the behavior of the social control agents seems as much to create disorder as to control it (p. 21).

Their behavior was usually responsible for the formation of the initial crowd and, through the use of inappropriate control strategies, the police unnecessarily angered the blacks who had gathered, escalating the scope of the conflict. Once the crowd had gathered, the police often made several errors, first by being unwilling or unable to

accept the legitimacy of the grievances voiced by the people who had gathered, and second, refusing to acknowledge, and consider as legitimate the black spokesman who emerged from the crowd. The police usually refused to negotiate with the rioters. The crux of the problem seemed to be the police's refusal to give up their claims as legitimate law enforcement agents in situations where they did not command the respect and loyalty of those with whom they were dealing, or to share their power with those whom the crowd that had gathered considered legitimate representatives.

Janowitz (1969) reported results found by Silverman and Silverman that in areas with more representative police forces and local governments, there were fewer incidents of riots. They concluded that whether the police and other local institutions were considered legitimate or representative played a large part in whether a riot would follow a precipitating event.

Summary

The overview of violence in America established the fact that violence in the form of recent riots is not an atypical occurrence. Couched in a historical analysis, it can be seen that violent group protests are a common mechanism used by high power and low power groups alike to influence the balance of power. High powered groups often used this technique to maintain the status quo, while low powered groups used it as a means to force a more just and equitable distribution of power and goods.

When the history of American mass violence is focused on those incidents mainly involving blacks, a picture emerges of violence being

used most often by the dominant white society to control and suppress the black masses with a sprinkling of reported attempts by blacks to strike out against and attack white people and institutions. It is only recently that one has begun to see an increase in the number of black initiated attacks on white people and property with the majority of these attacks being limited to attacks on property.

A number of theories have emerged trying to explain this seeming change in black behavior but a thoughtful historical analysis indicates that this behavior is not so much different but intensified. This behavior is not new but instead has some resemblance to earlier attacks during slavery by blacks against slavemasters and other whites. So then, it seems more appropriate to address the question of what caused the re-emergence of this behavior or what caused the display of this behavior to increase or intensify.

By and large, it can be established that on a broad basis, racism and injustice in America is the seed to any explanation of black mass violence. It was not objective or relative deprivation per se that set the stage for mass violence since 68% of the poor people in America were white and equally as deprived in terms of objective measures but did not riot. Instead, it was the deprivation combined with the injustices and inequalities associated with being <u>poor and black</u> that created the scenario of urban riots and disorders. It was not rapid urbanization and socialization alone that created the climate for violence since other segments of the population were also rapidly moving to urban areas. More importantly, it was being forced to live in a black slum created by segregation that was the impetus. It was the injustice of knowing that even after having "made it" in the

traditional sense, there was still no guarantee of being treated as a first, instead of a second class citizen--knowing that if you were black, your dollars, earned from hard work could not buy a nice house in a nice neighborhood the same as a white man's dollars could.

Once it has been established that the root of the problem is racism and injustice, then other aspects of black violence can be considered. One of those issues that was addressed was "Who Riots." The initial response to urban riots by those in the establishment was to attribute the disturbances to riff-raff and other marginal elements within the community. To the contrary, most of the studies conducted found that those who participated in riots were well intergrated into the black community. They were better educated than non-rioters, had a higher self-esteem and self image, were just as likely as non-rioters to be employed, and were more active and sophisticated politically. In general, those who rioted were representative of the black population with a higher concentration of young, Northern reared males. Those who reacted positively to the riots felt that they had a greater sense of control over their future than those who reacted negatively.

Another issue that was addressed was "Why Riots." The majority of the theories given tend to explain riots in terms of deprivation and the subsequent feelings of frustration, which leads to aggression and the release of that aggression. In some instances, riots were explained in terms of blocked goals that created social strains which were the preconditions for riots. Others explained riots in terms of the relative level of deprivation that the individuals felt, relative deprivation being the gap between what one expects to attain and what one actually attains. Davies believes that riots are caused not only

by the relative deprivation present but by the sequencing of the deprivation. He feels that violence is most likely to occur after a long period of rising expectations is followed by a gap between expectations and gratifications. According to Davies, the riots of the 1960's fit this J-Curve model. Other theories given tried to explain the riots in terms of changes in structural factors such as environment and socialization. It was basically found that those born or reared in the North from an early age were more likely to riot than those reared in the South. It was also found that those who rioted were generally more suspicious of the political system than those who did not.

Riots: Successful or Unsuccessful as a Means of Conflict Resolution

Alternatives to Riots

A factor that has to be considered before discussing whether black riots were successful or unsuccessful as a means of conflict resolution is what were the other alternatives to meaningful change, and what effect these alternatives, or the lack of them had on the occurrence of riots.

In the traditional American process, most change is affected and conflict resolved through the political process. The interests of groups are protected and furthered through representation on the governing boards and bodies. Blacks have been in many cases, denied access to and participation in the political processes that would have insured adequate representation on these policy making bodies. Through the enactment of discriminatory laws imposing unfair educational, residential and taxation requirements, Blacks were severely restricted

or prevented from seeking redress through the political system. Only recently has legislation been passed insuring full and protected voting rights for blacks.

A result of these discriminatory practices was and is a lack of elected black officials who could work within the system to affect change. And even given adequate numbers of black representatives, the legal process of court suits and constitutional reform were long and arduous processes taking sometimes years before any change is realized. So one mechanism through which blacks could have sought redress was the political-legal system, but this process had a built in circular fault that made it difficult, if not impossible for blacks to get rapid, meaningful changes. This system required elected black officials but at the same time was enforcing a set of discriminatory laws and practices that prevented blacks from achieving this end.

Another method that was used by blacks to affect the process of change was the non-violent political demonstration. These demonstrations were attempts to appeal to the conscience of an America that espoused a doctrine of freedom and equality for all on the one hand, but practiced overt and oppressive racism and discrimination against blacks on the other. Although these demonstrations had some beneficial effects in the long run, many innocent people were killed and maimed in the process. A by-product of these demonstrations was to show blacks the disrespect which white America (via white law enforcement agents) held for their efforts at procuring peaceful, non-violent change. The violent and brutal response of white law enforcement agents indicated to blacks that the use of legal channels on their part would not spare them from the billy club and water hoses.

Peaceful demonstrations were an alternative to black Americans for working within the system to affect change. This method ended in many innocent blacks being injured and killed. The brutal slaying of Dr. Martin Luther King, the champion of the non-violent protest, was the last step in a series that showed to black America that while they were being peaceful and non-violent, white America was responding with brutality and violence; while they were suffering physical hardship and death, whites received no repurcussions for their acts of violence and in many instances were being praised and lauded for their use of violence.

A look at the above ways in which blacks could affect peaceful change within the system indicated several factors that made these methods unattractive and undesirable for many people. First of all, the political-legal process was long and tedious and in many ways, stacked against blacks. Appeals to those in government often got the response that blacks would eventually get what they wanted but they had to go slow. To tell a group of people who have waited longer to receive the benefits of American citizenship than almost any other group in American history to go slow while other Americans were moving ahead at a rapid pace was probably an indication to many blacks that white America didn't intend to peacefully make any meaningful changes. Secondly, a look at the violent response of Southern white law enforcement agents was probably a reinforcement of the belief that white America was not willing to peacefully share the positive benefits of being an American citizen. Therefore, when considerations are being made of whether riots were successful or not, one also has to consider whether change would have occurred without riots, how much change, and

how fast. If the responses of white officials and Southern law enforcement agents is any indication, the process might have been slow indeed.

Low-power alternatives. The drawback to blacks using other less violent alternatives to resolve conflict or affect change is directly related to the issue of power. More explicitly, the problem for blacks was how they as a low-powered group could force a high-power group, whites, to peacefully share their power. There are several instances in which high-power groups are willing to peacefully share power with a contending group. Deutsch (1969) lists some of the following as instances in which this is more likely to occur:

1. When the low-power group has something of value that the high-power group could benefit from by sharing;

2. When the costs for sharing with the low-power group are small, i.e., the high-power group will lose very little by sharing;

3. When the costs for not sharing with the low-power group are high.

At one time, the unskilled labor of Blacks was considered a very valuable asset in the market place of America. But now in times of rapid mechanization, industrial America has lost its use for the cheap unskilled and semi-skilled labor of blacks. In terms of commodities, white America feels that it has little to gain from sharing with Blacks. At the same time, many whites feel that their security is threatened by blacks becoming more skilled and more powerful. They see the wealth of America as being a fixed size pie such that sharing with blacks means a subdividing or cutting away of their portion of the take. This group os people perceive the costs of sharing with blacks to be high. And up until the outbreak of riots, the cost of

not sharing with blacks was relatively low for the white group.

The limitations of being a low-power, low status group severely restricted the alternatives available to blacks and in many ways, contributed to the coercive use of riots and the threat of riots as a means of changing the balance of power.

Negative Effects of Riots

There were several negative effects of urban riots including white backlash and the emergence of the law and order point of view; extensive property damage; the polarization of attitudes within the white community. In addition, many people were injured and killed, the majority of them black.

When delineating the effects of urban riots, they can in general be categorized into two separate perspectives: (1) the effects as perceived by whites, and (2) the effects as perceived by blacks. Clearly, the loudest cries about how destructive and senseless the riots were were raised by whites. The riots had the effect of polarizing the attitudes of whites towards blacks with an increase in sympathy for those who were already sympathetic and a decrease in sympathy for those who already held anti-black feelings. In addition, there was an overall increase in the number of whites who felt that blacks wanted to move ahead to gain equal rights too fast (Skolnick, 1969). Campbell and Schuman (1968) present data which suggests that only 10% of the black community saw the riots as mainly looting while 33% of white men categorized it as looting. Sixty-four percent of the white sample felt that riots hurt the cause of black rights while only 13.5% believed they helped. On the other hand, a third of the blacks felt they helped, one fourth felt they made no difference, and one fourth

felt they hurt. The blacks who categorized the riots as harmful were mainly referring to "destruction and violence," while the whites who categorized it this way were mainly referring to "anti-black sentiment."

A clear response by white America to urban riots was the strengthening of the law and order perspective. Many whites began demanding better riot control measures, i.e., better equipment, more guards and training, etc. The majority of these people did not see riots as responses to the deplorable conditions in the ghetto. As reported by Campbell and Schuman (1968), a third of their sample saw riots "as unjustified conspiratorial assaults on law and order led by criminals, demagogic, or other undesirable elements, assaults that should be met first of all by firm police action" (p. 49).

There was extensive property damage during the riots, sometimes mounting to millions of dollars. Monetarily, this was more harmful to whites since the majority of the property and buildings in black ghettos was owned by whites. Many of these businesses were never rebuilt causing some hardship to those blacks who had to travel further to find other places to shop and do business.

Positive effects of riots. As the Campbell and Schuman data suggests, more blacks felt that the riots had positive effects than negative. They saw riots as protests against the unfair treatment they experienced as black Americans. Some of the positive effects of urban riots were to (1) focus attention on the problems faced in urban ghettos; (2) increase efforts to alleviate some of these problems; and (3) politicizing the black community.

Clearly, the primary positive effect of urban riots was to focus attention on the problems in the ghettos. Hamilton (1969) characterizes

the problem very precisely when he states that "I think it is clear that until the cities started blowing up and burning down there was only minimal concern or minimal effort to deal with the problems" (p. 47). To Hamilton, the effect of the riots was to focus attention on the equitable distribution of goods, i.e., better housing, jobs, schooling, etc. The Campbell and Schuman data indicates that blacks felt the riots helped in procuring positive gains. Twenty percent of the sample felt "riots helped stimulate action to solve major problems confronting blacks" - attempts to give better jobs, businesses, black national guardsmen, better housing, schools. Twelve percent of the black sample felt riots helped "whites to understand Negro problems," and 7% saw riots as a "show of Negro power."

A third effect of urban riots was to politicize the black community. Since the early 60's, blacks have begun to form pressure groups to push for more change. Issues such as "community control" of schools and businesses have become more prominent along with efforts to get more black elected officials, policemen, etc. This politicizing of the black community can be characterized as Hamilton (1969) states, as efforts to force an equitable distribution of decision making power as not only attempts to get more material goods but efforts to share in, and change the process by which decisions are made. Pfautz (1969) refers to the same concept when he states that black Americans are seeking power and status. Having educational, income, and occupational gains are not enough if they cannot be translated into having status in the functioning of the community.

A factor that was concurrent with the onset of urban riots and in some ways, was positively affected by them, was the rise in black

awareness and black pride. The sixties marked a time in which blacks began to reject many of the negative stereotypes associated with being black. Slogans such as "Black is Beautiful" became the catch word of the day and were scrawled across the vacant tenement walls in many black neighborhoods. Black writers such as Poussaint (1969) felt that the violence embodied in riots was an expression of black rage directed at the symbols of their oppression. Poussaint saw this as a change in behavior of violence being directed outward towards the appropriate targets instead of inward towards the self. The verbal expressions of black pride were a part of this whole process. To Poussaint, the riots served as a catharsis, a release of aggression and suppressed rage. This was an indication that black sentiment was changing from self-hatred to self-love. In describing the violence of riots, Poussaint states that "Perhaps this is an indication that self-love is beginning to outbalance self-hate in the black man's soul" (p. 33).

Summary

The question of whether urban riots were successful or unsuccessful as a means of conflict resolution is manifold. If one just looks at the effects in terms of property damage and the amount of money lost, then the overwhelming sentiment is that riots were unsuccessful. If one just looks at the effects on the attitudes of white people, then there seems to have been more of an initial negative effect than positive. But the question has to be posed as to whether it was more important for blacks to feel that the white population had "positive attitudes towards them" or to feel that real change was going on in other areas of concern such as jobs, housing, etc. Clearly, most

black people felt that the riots had a positive effect in changing the economic and environmental conditions around them even though they had a negative effect on the attitudes of whites. And as Campbell and Schuman pointed out, a substantial number of their white respondents felt that blacks were not justified in using any form of action protest against racial discrimination--non-violent or violent. Many whites felt that blacks wanted to move ahead too fast making legal appeals for remedying the injustices just as distasteful as other means. If the attitudes of these whites are taken as a gauge to whether riots were successful or not, then not only would riots themselves be considered in a negative light, but any positive change that came about as a result of riots would be considered negatively also.

Cooperative vs Competitive Processes

Up to this point, the focus of this paper has been to look at the positive and negative consequences of using riots as a means of conflict resolution without making reference to the benefits of a more cooperative process. Deutsch (1969) lists the following as being benefits of a cooperative process of conflict resolution:

> (a) It aids open and honest communication of relevant information between the participants; (b) It encourages the recognition of the legitimacy of each other's interests and of the necessity of searching for a solution which is responsive to the needs of each side; (c) It leads to a trusting, friendly attitude which increases sensitivity to similarities and common interests, while minimizing the salience of differences (p. 24).

On the other hand, a competitive relationship produces the following effects: (a) unreliable and improvished communication between the parties; (b) stimulating the view that the solution to the conflict is

imposed by one side on the other; (c) creation of suspicion, hostile attitudes which increase sensitivity to differences and threats, while minimizing the awareness of similarities (pp. 12-13).

Riots, when used as a strategy by low-power groups, make use of the tactics of coersion and threat to influence the balance of power. The demonstration of collective spirit and uncontrolled collective force exhibited during riots often forces or coerces those in power to respond, either positively or negatively, to the demands of the rioters. The act of rioting transforms and elevates the image of those of low-power from that of a weak, disjointed, ineffectual group that does not have to be bargained with, to that of a group with a collective spirit, a collective goal or aim, and a collective force. By virtue of its uncontrolled and irrational nature, riots force a quick response since at this stage of the conflict, the crowd demands immediate retribution and often cannot, and will not be put off by bargaining and delaying tactics. Those in power usually try to bring the crowd under control by the use of one of two methods: (1) excessive counterforce designed to crush and disperse the crowd; or (2) submitting to some of the demands in order to appease and quell the mood of the crowd. Since those in power cannot predict the mood of the crowd, the threat of future upheavels sustains the momentum and motivation to enforce the changes.

As mentioned by Deutsch (1969), there are limitations to the use of competitive processes, riots being one such process, to resolve conflict. Before and during riots, there is usually a lack of reliable communication between the two parties. At the onset of the initiating or precipitating event, the police and other forces of power usually

refuse to bargain with the crowd that has gathered. Spokesmen who emerge from the crowd are usually considered illegitimate representatives, and the demands and grievances of the crowd are also considered illegitimate. Those in power usually refuse to share decision making power, and at the same time, refuse to relinquish their role as a legitimate authority. Once the riot has begun, communication breaks down further and the crowd cannot or will not be bargained with at all. In instances where those in power give in to the demands of the rioters, it is done so grudgingly and an air of resentment and hostility lingers on the part of those who conferred the demands.

For members of the group that rioted, there are also drawbacks to the solutions that are reached and to the attempts at change that are initiated. The members of this group are often suspicious of the actions that are taken by the high-power group and of the intentions of those in power to honestly fulfill promises and continue changes that were initiated during the crisis stage. The suspicions exhibited by this group are probably well founded since the momentum and motivation to continue such change will only last as long as the threat embodied in the past riots remains salient. The fear and the threatening nature of riots creates the momentum for change, and the momentum and the power created by the fear of riots dissipates over time unless the act is repeated.

The solutions reached as a consequence of riots are not the results of a cooperative sharing between groups of equal or near equal power. And as pointed out by Hamilton, the concessions made by the white group still leaves feelings of discontent among blacks. Hamilton states that blacks will still resort to violence because of feelings

that the things they receive from the system are only a result of

> a paternalistic, larger society acting out of a perceived threat to self-interest. It is important to understand that large numbers of blacks believe that if the threat of violence is removed, there will be a slackening of interest on the part of the decision makers (p. 49).

Compared to a cooperative process, the solutions reached as a result of riots are not as enduring. The factors mentioned by Deutsch in a cooperative process are not present. There is not open and honest communication; recognition of the legitimacy of each others interests and a reaching of a solution that both sides feel satisfied with; nor a trusting and friendly attitude.

Concluding Statement

It is important to point out that as far as black Americans are concerned, a cooperative process of conflict resolution would have been much preferred to a competitive one. The uncontrolled, irrational nature of riots probably had as much of a frightening affect on blacks as on whites, especially since they were in the midst of the upheavels. But such a cooperative process cannot take place in many instances in the absence of a base of power from which to bargain and negotiate from. Until blacks are given what Hamilton calls an "equitable distribution of decision making power," riots remain an alternative to increase power, if only for short periods of time, and to affect the decision making process. A cooperative process cannot come about when those in power do not want to cooperate and feel they have little to lose by not cooperating. Until blacks gain enough power to enter into a truly cooperative process with whites, riots remain an alternative to change.

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